

February 6, 2007

Senator Kim Gillan, Chair
Senate Local Government Committee
Montana Senate
P.O. Box 200500
Helena, MT 59620-0500

Re: Realtors support letter for SB 345

Dear Senator Gillan:

As Montana real estate professionals, we understand the vital role that our spectacular landscape plays in attracting new people and new businesses to our state. Perhaps no other natural feature on our landscape is more treasured by Montanans and visitors alike than our legendary rivers and streams. Montana's pristine waters and blue ribbon fisheries attract anglers, boaters, and other outdoor enthusiasts from across the state and around the nation. Many of these people become so captivated by our rivers and streams that they eventually purchase land and homes here.

While we appreciate the important role that clean, healthy waterways play in drawing people and businesses to Montana, we also recognize that many of our river corridors are being developed at an unprecedented rate. When development takes place too close to rivers and streams, it can put people and homes in harm's way and cause unintended negative consequences on the natural environment. This goes against our code of ethics, which states that we should strive to preserve a healthful environment and we are obligated to let potential buyers know if the land on which they want to build is prone to flooding and other hazards.

Because we cherish Montana's natural beauty and we have a solemn responsibility as real estate professionals to keep people and their homes out of harm's way, we wholeheartedly support the concept of a statewide streamside setback bill, provided that it is applied fairly and evenly, and it allows county governments the flexibility to adjust setback distances based on local conditions.

It is our hope as real estate professionals that as our state's population continues to grow, our elected representatives will take the appropriate actions that are necessary to keep Montana the last, best place. Passing the Montana Stream Legacy Act would go a long way towards achieving that goal.

Sincerely,

Jim Applebee, Coldwell Banker RCI Realty, Bozeman
Bryan Atwell, Realty World, Bozeman
Jason Basye, Coldwell Banker RCI Realty, Bozeman
James Benedickt, Ranches West/Montana Prime Properties, Bozeman

Hebbard Blesius, ERA Landmark Western Land, Livingston
David Dedmon, Dedmon Real Estate, Hamilton
Sharon Dedmon, Dedmon Real Estate, Hamilton
Kathleen Driscoll, Driscoll Real Estate, Hamilton
Bob Evans, Bob Evans Real Estate, Bozeman
Jim Harris, Fischer Realty, Bozeman
Andrew Hurlburt, Coldwell Banker RCI Realty, Bozeman
Rich Ockford, Prudential Montana Real Estate, Bozeman
Donnie Olsson, Keller Williams, Bozeman
Andrew Rahn, Norman C. Wheeler & Associates, Bozeman
Gator Rivers, ERA Landmark, Bozeman
Paul Robertson, Realty World Big Sky Country, Livingston
Jack Sauter, Progressive Real Estate Development, Bozeman
Brett Tudsbury, Coldwell Banker RCI Realty, Bozeman
Dude Tyler, American Conservation Real Estate, Livingston
Darren Williams, Coldwell Banker RCI Realty, Bozeman